CONFERENCE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL RECORD OF THE FIVE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SECOND PLENARY MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 6 February 1990 at 10 a.m.

President: Mr. Hendrik Wagenmakers (Netherlands)

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The PRESIDENT: I declare open the 532nd plenary meeting and the first part of the 1990 session of the Conference on Disarmament. It is a privilege and an honour for me to take up the presidency of the Conference, on behalf of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, for the month of February. At the outset, I should like to pledge to all of you my unreserved co-operation and that of my delegation in discharging my responsibilities. I shall always be available to any member wishing to approach the Chair and, of course, I will rely on your valuable assistance in dealing with the questions that are before us.

As President of the Conference, I am very pleased to extend a warm welcome in our midst to two distinguished personalities attending this opening plenary meeting. I should like to note that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, His Excellency Hans van den Broek, has decided to address the Conference at this opening plenary meeting to emphasize once more, at the beginning of the Netherlands presidency of the Conference, his personal interest and support, as well as that of his Government, in the work of this multilateral disarmament negotiating forum. Minister van den Broek has addressed the Conference on two previous occasions, and is therefore well known to it.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, His Excellency Alois Mock, has expressed the wish to address the Conference today. The Minister has visited the Conference before and has shared with us his thoughtful views on subjects under consideration. As you know, his country has for several years now been participating actively in our work as a non-member. I would point out that during my consultations, members expressed to me their desire that the Minister be invited, as a matter of courtesy, to deliver his statement today before we deal with all the requests from non-members for participation in the work of the Conference. Accordingly, I shall be very happy to give him the floor. I am sure that all members will listen with particular interest to the statements that the Ministers will make today, and I should like to thank them for having taken time from their busy schedules to share with us their thoughts on vital questions of disarmament.

Allow me also, on behalf of the Conference, to thank my predecessor, Ambassador El Ghali Benhima of Morocco, for the outstanding manner in which he conducted our work during the month of August. His diplomatic skills, experience and knowledge of multilateral diplomacy were valuable assets for the Conference, in particular during the difficult task of preparing our annual report.

Since the last annual session of the Conference, several friends and colleagues have left us. I refer to the representatives of Canada, Czechoslovakia, Mexico, Romania, the United States of America and Venezuela. We wish all of them every success in their future activities and all personal happiness. While I am sure that we shall miss all of them, I wish to refer in particular to the departure of a distinguished personality who has successfully devoted much of his brilliant career to disarmament. I refer to Ambassador Alfonso García Robles of Mexico, who has represented his country with distinction in this Conference since 1967, one of the two Nobel Peace Prize laureates who have served in the Conference and the architect of the Treaty of Tlatelolco. He was the dean of the disarmament diplomatic community, and has made an indelible mark on this body's deliberations.

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At the same time, I am happy to welcome to the Conference the new representatives who have recently been appointed as leaders of their delegations: Ambassadors Roberto García Moritán of Argentina, Gerald Shannon of Canada, Hou Zhitong of China, José Pérez Novoa of Cuba, Andrea Negrotto Cambiaso of Italy, Mitsuro Donowaki of Japan, Miguel Marín Bosch of Mexico, Stephen Ledogar of the United States of America and Horacio Arteaga of Venezuela. To all of them we extend our best wishes in the performance of their important duties.

I should also like to welcome the Under-Secretary-General for Disarmament Affairs, Ambassador Yasushi Akashi, who is following our proceedings today. Under the direction of Ambassador Akashi the Department provides substantive support for the Conference. I wish to thank him for his continued interest in our work and for the very efficient manner in which he responds to the requirements of this multilateral disarmament negotiating forum.

I wish also, as President of this Conference, to refer to the untimely death of a member of the secretariat, Mademoiselle Annie Rebuzzi, who had been with us for the last two years. During that period, Mademoiselle Rebuzzi was highly regarded by the Conference for her professional and personal qualities. She will be missed by us and by her friends and colleagues in the secretariat, and I should like to ask the Secretary-General of the Conference, Ambassador Komatina, to transmit to her parents, on behalf of the Conference, our deeply felt condolences on their irreparable loss.

We shall now proceed to the order of business for today. There are a number of urgent organizational matters which need to be settled to permit the Conference to start its consideration of matters of substance. I refer to the adoption of the agenda and programme of work, as well as the re-establishment of subsidiary bodies on various items on the agenda. I hope, in particular, that we can soon resume our work on a convention banning chemical weapons, in the spirit of the agreement achieved in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference. I am encouraged by the progress noted in my consultations on the mandate to be adopted for the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Early agreement on that text will make it possible to intensify our negotiations under the dynamic chairmanship of Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden. I am expecting that we shall re-establish today the Ad hoc Committees on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons and on Radiological Weapons, with their present mandates, and appoint their Chairmen. As the agenda item entitled "Prevention of an arms race in outer space" is one of the major issues before the international community, I also hope that the Ad hoc Committee dealing with that question will begin its work without delay. I believe that, if we succeed in taking the relevant decisions quickly, the Conference will have made a good start.

We shall also consider other proposals dealing with the manner in which the Conference should consider other agenda items. In that connection, I should like to recall that we still need to find appropriate organizational frameworks for the nuclear issues on the agenda. In particular, I wish to stress the importance of the informal individual consultations held last year by the repesentative of Japan, with the encouragement of successive Presidents of the Conference, on an adequate mandate for an Ad hoc Committee under agenda

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item 1, entitled "Nuclear test ban". I understand that those consultations will continue. I welcome the initiative taken by the representative of Japan, and I wish him success in his efforts. Of course, I remain available to assist him and other members in their efforts.

Last but not least, we shall deal with requests for participation from non-member States. I believe that the Conference should respond swiftly to the promising fact that no less than 30 States not members have signified their interest in being involved in our work during the 1990 session. Multilateral disarmament negotiations can only benefit from such wide participation, as this will ensure that one of the functions of this body - achieving agreements of universal acceptance - is properly fulfilled.

As you know, the question of the expansion of the membership of the Conference is still pending, in spite of the fact that its consideration started eight years ago. I hope that a solution can be found which will allow us to discharge this responsibility towards the international community. Another subject requiring review is the improved and effective functioning of the Conference. My own delegation has contributed actively to our work in this field by submitting various proposals, including some dealing with our annual programme of work. I intend to conduct consultations to determine how best we can continue our consideration of this matter.

I should now like to give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who will read out a message addressed to the Conference by Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar.

Mr. KOMATINA (Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): The following is the message of the Secretary-General of the United Nations to the Conference on Disarmament.

"After a long period of conflicts, tensions and mistrust we are witnessing growing signs of progress in the search for a stable and permanent peace. The past year has proved to be a year of consolidation of trends in that direction.

"Although global stability and peace have yet to be attained, positive developments in international relations continue to gain impetus. The growing rapprochement between East and West, movement towards settlement of various regional conflicts, important political changes in Europe and other regions of the world and the growing involvement of the United Nations in major issues facing the international community create a favourable atmosphere. New opportunities are now offered for the pursuit of more meaningful measures in the field of arms limitation and disarmament. I note the successful implementation of the INF Treaty and an encouraging momentum in the START negotiations. These are significant signs of progress in addressing the challenges in the world today.

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"The wide spectrum of bilateral and multilateral negotiations and the subjects with which they deal generate hope that the current trend will become irreversible, allowing the process of disarmament to proceed at a faster pace. Tangible contributions to this process came from the meeting of heads of State or Government of non-aligned countries held in Belgrade in September 1989, and from the meeting of the leaders of the two major Powers in Malta held in December 1989. We welcome their declarations that it is time to leave the epoch of the cold war to move to a more secure world. All these efforts to turn 1990 into a year of concrete arms limitation and disarmament agreements must be welcomed.

"I have often stressed the overriding importance of the early conclusion of a multilateral agreement on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling, acquisition, transfer and use of chemical weapons, and on their destruction. In 1989 political consensus was advanced in the international community on the urgent need to agree on such a convention. There now exist ever-growing resolve and an explicit pledge to deal with pending problems at the earliest possible date. The Final Declaration of 149 States at the Paris Conference testified to the truly universal awareness of the need to eradicate chemical weapons for ever. In that connection, I also commend the initiative of the Government of Australia to strengthen and expand co-operation between the chemical industry and Governments by convening a Government-Industry Conference in Canberra.

"Once again I appeal to the members of the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of high priority, to use the political momentum generated by all those events and intensify during this current session the negotiations for the final elaboration of the convention. There is no justification for unnecessary delay. I am confident that all States will abide by their commitments to achieve that objective.

"The Conference on Disarmament remains entrusted with the consideration of other important subjects of a global nature which continue to require urgent multilateral action. The United Nations has repeatedly assigned the highest priority to the issue of cessation of all nuclear test explosions. The encouraging signs witnessed in the bilateral negotiations should be further advanced. However, I remain convinced that a complete ban on such tests can pave the way to nuclear disarmament and rid the world of the nuclear menace. The Conference on Disarmament has an irreplaceable role to play in that respect. Efforts to amend the partial test-ban Treaty of 1963 and turn it into a comprehensive test ban reflect widespread concern over the present situation.

"Nor can the Conference on Disarmament renounce its responsibility for the consideration of issues of nuclear disarmament and the prevention of nuclear war. I hope that the Fourth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons will provide impetus to that process.

"There is a convergence of views that outer space should be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. As emphasized on many occasions, the

(Mr. Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

Conference on Disarmament has the primary role in the prevention of an arms race in outer space. This is a global issue, since any military activity in outer space is relevant to the whole world.

"I hope that positive changes in international relations will favourably influence the consideration of items on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. The importance of bilateral and regional agreements for the disarmament process, in both nuclear and conventional issues, cannot be overstated. Equally, this progress must be matched by advances in this multilateral forum. To do so, the Conference on Disarmament - the single multilateral disarmament negotiating forum - must be permitted to play its negotiating role to the full.

"I wish you every success in your work."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his statement. I should be grateful if he would transmit to Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar our appreciation for the important message that he has conveyed to us.

The Secretary-General of the United Nations has also addressed to me a letter transmitting the resolutions and decisions on disarmament which were adopted at the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly. That letter and its attachments have been circulated today as document CD/959.

I have on my list of speakers the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, His Excellency Hans van den Broek, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, His Excellency Alois Mock, and the representatives of Mexico and Sweden. The representative of Mexico will also speak at the end of the list in his capacity as Co-ordinator of the Group of 21.

I take particular pleasure in now giving the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, His Excellency Hans van den Broek.

Mr. van den BROEK (Netherlands): Mr. President, it is a very special pleasure for me today to be amongst the first to congratulate you on taking up the presidency for this month, and, if you will allow me to add a few personal words, I think it is most gratifying to see my old friend Ambassador Hendrik Wagenmakers in the Chair. It seems that the month of February usually provides a couple of thorny issues to grapple with, but I can assure you distinguished members of the Conference on Disarmament that the task of solving these problems, or at least helping to solve them, is certainly in good hands.

I also join you, Mr. President, in thanking the outgoing President, Ambassador Benhima of Morocco, for the able and balanced way in which he presided over the Conference, and I also extend on my part a warm welcome to the newcomers to the Conference. I note that amongst them there is vast experience in the field of arms control and disarmament, and we hope to benefit greatly from this experience. A reassuring thought is that delegations will continue to profit from the expeditious, professional

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assistance of the secretariat, so ably guided by Ambassador Komatina. And in this introduction I also wish to voice a special salute to my colleague and friend, Mr. Alois Mock, Foreign Minister of Austria and, as I know from experience, a staunch supporter of movements towards peace and détente. I have to pity him somewhat because he will speak after me: if we don't say the same thing it will be thought that we disagree, while if we do say the same it will be said to be duplication. I know Alois, that you are very capable and very able in dealing with such dilemmas, and I also wish the Conference a lot of interesting moments when you address this Conference - it's good to see you here.

In a speech to representatives of the international community such as yourselves, I cannot ignore the events which shook the European continent in the revolutionary year of 1989, the year that marked the end of the post-war era as we see it. Pluralist democracy and human freedom are gaining ground, and I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to pay tribute to those who have dedicated themselves to this goal, showing great creativity and political courage, and sometimes even paying with their lives.

The turbulent developments in Europe have not yet come to an end. Free elections, leading to the establishment of legitimate Governments, have still to be held. There is also an urgent need for drastic economic reforms to enable the societies of Central and Eastern Europe to sustain themselves. I believe that Western countries have a duty to lend their moral, financial and political support to this process.

This is not the place for a detailed examination of the ways we can help, or the specific features of the wave of democratization in individual countries. I realize that for some of you this will have a very personal dimension. I would, however, like to say a few words about the debate on what is being called the "new architecture" of Europe.

The removal of the "iron curtain" has eroded traditional political barriers between East and West. The certainties of the cold war have rapidly disappeared, but what is to take their place? What sort of new order should we strive to achieve? I should like to emphasize that it is not a question of devising blueprints or new structures just for the sake of it. We should aim at a gradual process, one which guarantees stability, and one which ensures that the new structures reflect the will of the people. In this respect, I am thinking primarily of efforts to overcome the division of Europe and, more particularly, the division of Germany. It is not for me to provide a formula for solving this question this morning. But I would like to emphasize the following. The inherent right to self-determination of all peoples is paramount. This certainly applies to the German people as well. I can understand the emotions of a divided nation, and I can also understand the misgivings about a renewed Germany that is not embedded in a structure of stability. Such a structure of stability is to be provided by the European Community and the Atlantic Alliance as far as Western co-operation is concerned, and the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe as far as all-European co-operation is concerned. It is therefore vitally important that the process of unification should proceed by democratic means, and above all that the new Germany should be a democratic one. Forty years of democracy in the Federal Republic of Germany give us every reason for confidence.

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between the United States and the Soviet Union will certainly have a positive effect on the work here in the Conference on Disarmament. I should also like to thank the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee, Ambassador Morel of France, for his tireless efforts over the past year. I wish his successor, Ambassador Hyltenius of Sweden, every success, and assure him that he can count on the full co-operation of the Dutch delegation. We have certainly not yet reached the end of our exercise, but there is a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. On the basis of what has already been achieved and the detailed nature of the discussions on virtually every aspect of the chemical weapons treaty, it should be possible to resolve the remaining major issues this year and to wind up the negotiations promptly thereafter. If we demonstrate the political and, I should add, the practical will, this should be feasible, and we will soon be on the home stretch.

Speaking of practical will, I would like to stress how important it is to gain practical experience with the verification system to be established under the convention. In that context, trial inspections have proved to be extremely useful. You are aware of the trial inspection held in a chemical plant in the Netherlands last spring. We now intend to organize a trial challenge inspection in a military installation in the near future. Its results will be communicated to the Conference on Disarmament at an early date.

With the end of the negotiations now, as we hope, in sight, I wish to repeat my offer to host the international organization responsible for the implementation of the chemical weapons treaty in the Netherlands. We propose The Hague, due to its central location and accessibility and because it is the seat of other international organizations such as the International Court of Justice. The Netherlands also has a sophisticated chemical industry and laboratories which can lend assistance. I hope that the conviction and dedication with which my country has continuously supported the negotiations will earn your support. I intend to provide you with the details of the Netherlands offer in the near future. I gather that my friend Alois Mock will be making similar proposals on behalf of Vienna. Consider us to be friendly rivals.

I do not wish to conclude without pointing to the rediscovery and proliferation of a category of weapons which was banned in a treaty over 15 years ago, but which unfortunately seems to have regained its attractiveness for military purposes. I refer to biological weapons. We must combine our utmost efforts and imagination to stop the abhorrent abuse of substances and equipment otherwise used for legitimate purposes. In the Netherlands we are examining the possibility of taking steps at the national level. For some time the Government has been engaged in contacts on this matter with Netherlands-based companies and institutes of international repute which are active in the field of biotechnology. We are now considering the possibility of issuing a paper to raise awareness of this problem among relevant companies and institutes. Further measures cannot be excluded.

It would be highly ironic if these horrific weapons, which we had hoped to banish, were once again to acquire a place in countries' arsenals, at a time when so much progress is being made in many areas of arms control. I fear that we are also paying the price for the absence of a verification mechanism in the biological weapons Convention, which as it stands represents

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little more than a political commitment to abandon these weapons. The international community has attempted to close the gap between this commitment and the need to verify compliance with the Treaty to some extent by means of the confidence-building measures drawn up three years ago. The Netherlands contributed to their coming into being. This should not close our eyes for the fact that even if there had been a verification system, water-tight control would still have been extremely difficult, given the ease with which biological weapons can be manufactured in secret.

The third review conference on the biological weapons Convention will be held in September 1991. We should already be reflecting about ways and means of strengthening the treaty and verifying compliance, in order to halt and reverse the continuing proliferation. It is therefore high time that we embarked on international consultations on these matters. I am considering making a Dutch contribution to this process by inviting a number of interested countries to attend a seminar-type conference on this vital issue in the Netherlands.

I have dwelt on some hopeful events - both in the political and in the arms control fields - but also on some discouraging and disquieting developments. The message is clear: arms are still with us in too great a number and, I hasten to add, in many and sometimes new and threatening forms. We should not agree to their being negotiated away from one place to appear subsequently elsewhere; not to speak of the strains being put on the budgets of many of the nations assembled here to the detriment of other pressing needs. It is our collective task to ensure that our planet becomes a safer, juster and healthier place to live. With the necessary determination, this objective should not be beyond our reach. Your contribution in meeting this challenge will be invaluable.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands for his important statement and for the kind words that he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria, His Excellency Alois Mock.

Mr. MOCK (Austria) (translated from French): It is with particular pleasure that I convey my congratulations to you, Mr. Minister and dear friend, as the Netherlands takes up the presidency for the month of February. Your presence confirms your country's long-standing commitment to the disarmament process. I am also pleased to greet you as the representative of a country with which Austria has long maintained close and friendly relations, and I thank you warmly for the kind word that you addressed to me by way of welcome. As I am particularly attached to the social market economy, I must accept competition, which I am sure will be very effective and very competent.

We can assert without exaggeration that the world has been transformed in 1989. The advent of a new climate of co-operation in East-West relations, the settlement of regional conflicts, the movement towards democratization in Eastern Europe as well as a vigorous North-South dialogue require a special effort on the part of all political forces involved. We note with pleasure that several States in Eastern Europe have taken the path of parliamentary

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democracy and the social market economy. In this connection Austria is fully aware of the need for concrete assistance, and will continue to step up its active support.

The Conference on Disarmament is resuming its work at a time when disarmament prospects are highly encouraging. The international political climate favours the conclusion of efforts designed to reduce military confrontation considerably and consolidate peace and stability. Hence it is essential, given this dynamic trend for the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva, the single global framework for disarmament negotiations, to make an appropriate contribution and enable decisive progress to be accomplished. Here we are thinking first and foremost of the conclusion of work on the convention on the prohibition of the use, production and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction. In this area, several new initiatives were put forward last year. Thus, prospects for the early conclusion of the convention have considerably improved.

In January last year, in Paris, 141 States condemned the use of chemical weapons and emphasized the need to conclude a convention on chemical weapons at an early date. In September 1989, the Government-Industry Conference against Chemical Weapons held in Canberra intensified dialogue on the world scale between government and industry representatives and clearly showed the chemical industry's full support for the future convention.

Bilaterally, the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the United States and the USSR, Messrs. Baker and Shevardnadze, in Wyoming, led to real progress. On that occasion, the Ministers reached agreement in the area of data exchange and trial inspections in advance of the conclusion of a convention. Subsequently, we learned with keen interest of the proposals that President Bush tabled in his address to the forty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly. We believe that his statement and the favourable reaction of the Soviet Foreign Minister constitute an encouraging sign. Lastly, we would mention the great significance of the meeting between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev in Malta.

Given this wealth of ideas and initiatives, we share the view of those who consider 1990 to be a crucial year for decisive progress in negotiations, particularly on the question of chemical weapons. The hope of arriving at a convention on the prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of chemical weapons and on their destruction, is shared well beyond the ranks of the 40 member States of the Conference on Disarmament, who have for many years been working on the drafting of this specific and complex agreement. The effectiveness of this convention depends to a major extent on the widest possible participation. Austria believes that all States that so wish should be granted the opportunity to participate in the drawing up of the convention, as has been stated by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and in the Paris Declaration. This alone can offer an assurance that the text of the convention will take account of all specific concerns.

Concurrently, we believe that it is of particular value to the future convention to conduct an exchange of appropriate data in advance in order to promote mutual trust and the early signature of the convention by the greatest possible number of States. In this context, I have pleasure in announcing

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that Austria will shortly be submitting two working papers to the Conference: a complete report on the trial inspection conducted in autumn 1989 at a chemical industry facility, and updated data on chemical industry production. Austria is prepared to do its utmost to contribute to the early conclusion of the chemical weapons convention.

Complete and effective verification of the convention remains the principal difficulty in the negotiations. The purpose of any system of rules should be to arrive at a degree of monitoring that precludes the production or stockpiling of militarily significant quantities of chemical weapons. This purpose seems capable of achievement. The need for effective verification should not, however, delay the conclusion of our work. This means, in our view, that certain limitations upon the monitoring of the convention should be accepted. In other words, we should weigh the wish for effective verification against the need for the early conclusion of this work. Reports of the growing proliferation of chemical weapons clearly show that time is working against us.

The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons, as a body of member States responsible for monitoring compliance with contractual obligations, will have to perform essential and very specific tasks. Hence the composition of its decision-making bodies is of particular importance, and should take account of political and geographical criteria, as well as criteria relating to the volume of chemical industry production. Austria recognizes the considerable importance of this organization. Two years ago in this very forum I first indicated that Austria was prepared to host this organization. Bearing in mind the progress achieved in the negotiations, I should now like to make this a concrete offer. In making this proposal and inviting the future Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons to Vienna, Austria also hopes to give new impetus to the negotiations regarding the structure and functions of the organization. This invitation issued on behalf of Austria, a neutral State in perpetuity, is fully in harmony with its consistent policy of peace and international co-operation. My country has already shown in the past that it was prepared to contribute to the work of international organizations, not only in a general way but also in a specific way. This was demonstrated, for example, in the construction of the Vienna International Centre, home to the official headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Office at Vienna and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization. The Vienna International Centre was entirely financed by Austria and is made available to its users for a token rent of one schilling per year.

Austria is prepared to host the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on identical terms to those granted to the organizations which have already installed themselves in the Vienna International Centre. Firstly, Austria will make available to the organization adequate premises for the staff required during the preparatory phase, during the chemical weapon destruction phase and during the subsequent phase of permanent monitoring. Austria intends to make available to the organization initially a provisional headquarters with offices accommodating between 450 and 600 persons. This building, located in the centre of Vienna and with a net surface of 6,300 square metres, would be renovated and made available to the organization free of charge. Once the expected size of the organization is known, it is

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planned to construct a new building at the Vienna International Centre or in its immediate neighbourhood to house it permanently. For this permanent headquarters Austria would also provide the land and bear the construction costs of the building.

Secondly, in order to place the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons on an equal footing with the international organizations already in Vienna, Austria would grant the organization and its staff the same privileges and immunities as those enjoyed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, the United Nations Office at Vienna and other similar organizations.

Thirdly, in the event that the conferences of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons were too large to be held at the organization's headquarters or at the Vienna International Centre, Austria would bear the cost of hiring appropriate conference rooms. In the course of the spring session of the Conference on Disarmament, Austria will submit a working paper containing details of this offer.

To highlight Austria's interest in an early solution to outstanding questions relating to the convention on chemical weapons, but also within the context of the possible establishment of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons in Vienna, the federal Government has adopted a programme of research on the verification and monitoring of the chemical weapons convention. Funding of 3 million schillings has been made available for this programme for the current budgetary year. This initiative will enable us, on the one hand, to set up a highly qualified group of experts in monitoring of chemical weapons and, on the other, to draw up proposed solutions in the negotiating areas that remain outstanding. These proposals could be submitted to the Committee on Chemical Weapons.

Austria makes this offer as a State observing permanent neutrality and in its capacity as a host country for organizations and international conferences. We seek in this way to contribute to closer co-operation between States. My country also sees this offer as the continuation and logical consequence of the tireless efforts that it has been pursuing for decades for peace and disarmament in the world. In this connection I should like to recall that 30 years ago Austria participated for the first time in United Nations peace-keeping operations. Thousands of Austrian soldiers have participated in such United Nations operations. In 1988 the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to pay tribute to this United Nations commitment. Austria's policy in this field was confirmed at the international level by the establishment in Vienna of the third headquarters office of the United Nations. The new Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons could also benefit from the international profile of Vienna and the infrastructure built up in our capital over a period of more than 10 years. The organization would enjoy numerous advantages: the possibility of direct communications with the United Nations system; the possibility of pooling experience with IAEA, an organization established in Vienna since 1957, which has acquired a vast stock of knowledge regarding inspection missions; the possibility of realizing savings through the shared use of technical facilities; and work facilitated by long experience of international conferences and the requisite human and technical resources. The future staff will enjoy the professional and personal advantages that can be offered by a city which has been open to

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international life for many years. I might mention the existence of 10 international schools, with instruction in 8 languages, 3 foreign-language theatres, and also the presence of churches and places of worship belonging to 10 religions. Finally, I should like to add that the opening up of the borders between East and West is particularly tangible in Vienna, and this in itself constitutes a factor conducive to international disarmament efforts.

The recent welcome progress achieved in the area of disarmament is also to be observed in other exchanges which are under way in Vienna: I am referring to the talks on confidence- and security-building measures and the negotiations on conventional armed forces in Europe.

In view of the very effective competition from the Netherlands it is quite clear that I have had to advance very detailed arguments.

Allow me to conclude my comments on chemical weapons with a brief comment on the forty-fourth session of the United Nations General Assembly. We welcome with satisfaction the report of the group of experts on procedures for verification in the event of the use of chemical weapons, and we view it as an invaluable instrument which could serve as a basis for measures to be taken by the United Nations Secretary-General. In the area of biological weapons the delegation of your country, Mr. Minister, and the delegation of Australia, as well as our delegation, closely co-operated at the General Assembly and successfully redrafted the United Nations General Assembly resolution on this issue. Bearing in mind the Austrian chairmanship of the second review conference in 1986, which was crowned with success, and thinking ahead to the next review conference in 1991, we attach considerable importance to the results achieved in New York, and to active preparation for this conference.

The prevention of an arms race in outer space remains one of the major concerns of the community of States. We believe that the verification of arms control agreements or disarmament agreements should constitute the sole military use of space. The disclosure of other military activities in space would constitute a great step forward towards the achievement of this objective. We regret that no progress was made in this area in 1989. The progress made in the bilateral talks between the two super-Powers towards a START agreement is a positive sign in our view, and we hope that the forthcoming summit between Presidents Bush and Gorbachev will permit further movement in that direction. At the same time we welcome the implementation of the "open skies" concept.

The conclusion of a comprehensive nuclear test-ban treaty remains a priority goal on the international disarmament agenda. Although in 1989 it was not possible to set up a committee within the Conference on Disarmament, we hope that this year it will be possible to agree on a mandate. Austria fully appreciates the work of the Group of Seismic Experts, which is to develop a model international seismic data exchange system. Since the first phase, namely the large-scale test, was completed in 1989, we hope that the second and third phases will demonstrate the satisfactory operation of an international monitoring system. Austria will continue its sustained participation in the work of the Group of Experts, and will make the necessary information available to it at the current stage of the work.

(Mr. Mock, Austria)

In 1990 Geneva will once again host an international conference to review the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. This fourth review conference will begin in August, and will also have to consider the question of the validity of the Treaty after 1995. This Treaty is, in our view, an important guarantee of the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. Its lasting success is without any doubt closely related to specific steps in the area of nuclear disarmament. Austria will actively participate in this forthcoming review conference, and we hope it will be possible for us to arrive at an early consensus on the validity of the Treaty after 1995.

The fact that Austria's detailed offer to host the headquarters of the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons is being presented at this specific moment bears witness to our optimism regarding the early conclusion of the negotiations.

In conclusion, I should like to thank the Conference on Disarmament, and in particular your delegation, Mr. Minister, for having made the necessary arrangements for my personal participation, and I offer the Conference on Disarmament my warmest wishes for success in its work in 1990.

The PRESIDENT: I thank His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria for his important statement and for the kind words that he addressed to the Chair. His Excellency the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands regrets that he has to leave us, but he has to address the Commission on Human Rights immediately. I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico, Ambassador Marín Bosch.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico) (translated from Spanish): I should like to assure the distinguished Foreign Ministers of the Netherlands and Austria, whom we are pleased to see in this room today, that the Government of Mexico is not seeking to host the international organization which will be responsible for implementing the future chemical weapons convention.

Allow me first of all, Mr. President, to congratulate you upon taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament. February has been an especially important month in the work of this negotiating forum, since during this stage the scope of the programme of work for the whole year is usually defined more precisely. We count on you to get our work in 1990 off to a good start, and we offer you the full co-operation of the Mexican delegation. I should like also to put on record our gratitude to the distinguished Ambassador of Morocco, El Ghali Benhima, for the way in which he conducted the work of the Conference during last September and the inter-sessional period.

It is also a pleasure to see Ambassador Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference, and Ambassador Berasategui, Deputy Secretary-General, who, together with the other members of the secretariat, make a valuable contribution to our work. The presence of Under-Secretary-General Akashi here today underlines his dedication to the cause of disarmament.

I should like to thank you, Mr. President, for the words of welcome you addressed to the new representatives to the Conference, among which I have the honour to be included.

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

Bearing in mind the changing international situation and the importance that the Government of Mexico attributes to the work that has been assigned to us, allow me to read the message that President Carlos Salinas de Gortari has addressed to the Conference:

"Today the Conference on Disarmament is once again taking up its important task, at a time of renewed hope in disarmament. The United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics have begun talks and negotiations on a number of issues, beginning with nuclear disarmament, and the community of nations is witnessing the emergence of fresh and encouraging developments in the search for international peace and security.

"The Conference on Disarmament now has before it a major opportunity to translate this climate of détente into specific agreements on the priority issues: nuclear disarmament, and more particularly the cessation of all nuclear tests, and the elimination of chemical weapons.

"Disarmament has been under discussion at the Palais des Nations in Geneva for over a half a century. We ought now to move forward along the path marked out by the United Nations to achieve a safer world with fewer weapons. The ultimate objective of general and complete disarmament under effective international control remains as valid today as it was in 1962 when this Conference began its work.

"As members of the Conference on Disarmament, all of us have a duty and an obligation to fulfil the hopes of the peoples of the world, to banish the spectre of war and its deadly instruments. The bilateral understandings should be followed by disarmament agreements negotiated on a multilateral basis. The most pressing issue is the total suspension of nuclear tests. A number of possibilities are open to us in order to achieve that objective.

"The elimination of chemical weapons is also a matter of priority. The international community is entitled to demand the rapid conclusion of a convention in this field. We need to draw up a comprehensive programme of disarmament to serve as a framework of our efforts. Not one of us, moreover, is unaware of the close link between disarmament and economic development.

"We have instructed our delegation to the Conference to maintain Mexico's constructive contribution towards achieving the objectives we have all set ourselves and to strive to strengthen the role of the United Nations in this field of such vital importance to mankind.

"I should now like to take this opportunity to say a few words to the Conference about a great Mexican who is well known to all of you.

"The Government of Mexico will shortly be paying a national tribute to Mr. Alfonso García Robles. On behalf of the people and Government of Mexico, I should like here and now to express our gratitude to Ambassador Emeritus García Robles for his tireless devotion in defending

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

the guiding principles of our foreign policy. Those principles correspond to those in the Charter of the United Nations, an organization he served for 10 years as an international official.

"His involvement in this Conference began almost a quarter of a century ago, on 21 February 1967, when he presented the Treaty of Tlatelolco, which had been opened for signature in Mexico City a week before. It was quite natural that the presentation should have been the responsibility of the then Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, as he had led Mexico's efforts to evolve a legal instrument embodying Latin America's aspiration to become a nuclear-free zone. He subsequently participated actively and without interruption in the annual sessions of the Conference on Disarmament: first of all as Under-Secretary, then as Permanent Representative to the United Nations in New York, and in 1976 as Minister for Foreign Affairs. From 1977 onwards, he became Permanent Representative to the Conference itself.

"In 1982 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize together with Mrs. Alva Myrdal of Sweden. Today we wish to assure him once again of our respect, recognition and gratitude."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of Mexico for his statement, and for transmitting the important message addressed to the Conference by His Excellency the President of Mexico, in which he expresses recognition of the outstanding contribution made by Ambassador Emeritus García Robles to the cause of disarmament. As I have had occasion to state before, the Conference joins in the tribute paid by the President of Mexico to Ambassador García Robles. I also thank the representative of Mexico for the kind words that he addressed to me. I now give the floor to the representative of Sweden, Ambassador Theorin, whom I welcome to the Conference.

Mrs. THEORIN (Sweden): Mr. President, allow me at the outset to welcome you to the Conference on Disarmament and to congratulate you on taking up your important duties during the crucial first month of the Conference. I am sure that with your long experience in the field of disarmament, you will be able to guide the work of this Conference in a very constructive and productive manner, and I pledge the full support of the Swedish delegation in your efforts. At the same time, I wish to thank your predecessor as President of the Conference, Ambassador Benhima, for having - with his well-known diplomatic skills and experience - brought the previous session of the Conference to a successful conclusion. I wish to extend a warm welcome to our new Ambassadors in the CD, Ambassadors Rasaputram of Sri Lanka, Ogada of Kenya, Negrotto Cambiaso of Italy, Pérez Novoa of Cuba, Hou Zhitong of China, Donowaki of Japan, Shannon of Canada, García Moritán of Argentina and Arteaga of Venezuela, and Ambassador Ledogar of the United States. I would like to use this occasion to express my appreciation and gratitude to Ambassador García Robles of Mexico. Although you are unable to be in our midst today,

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

(continued in Spanish)

dear Alfonso, I would like to assure you that we will miss you as you cease your duties in the United Nations Conference on Disarmament and take leave of all the friends you have here. I hope and do not doubt that we will meet again in the future and that we will thus be able to continue drawing on your experience and wisdom in your quest for disarmament and peace.

(continued in English)

A life-long devotion to the cause of disarmament and multilateral affairs has made Ambassador García Robles the dean and unswerving inspirer in our midst. With a formidable record of professional achievement he has made an outstanding contribution to the noble cause of disarmament. Ambassador García Robles played a decisive role in connection with the Treaty of Tlatelolco. The same was true for the first special session devoted to disarmament and its Final Document. His name has been intimately linked with this august body. He made an important contribution to the World Disarmament Campaign. Ambassador García Robles also served as Foreign Minister of his country and, furthermore, he has been a member of the Palme Commission and participated very actively in the Six-nation Initiative. Together with my compatriot, Alva Myrdal, Ambassador García Robles was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1982. I welcome your successor and close collaborator, Ambassador Marín Bosch, upon his return to the CD, this time as the leader of the Mexican delegation, and I feel assured that the traditional close co-operation in disarmament affairs between Mexico and Sweden will fruitfully continue.

I listened with great interest to the statements made by the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands and Austria and to the statement made by the Ambassador of Mexico. Their statements will be carefully studied by my delegation.

Ours is a time of rapid political change. Let us for a moment imagine ourselves five or six years back in time. Who could have envisaged the political metamorphosis that the world is currently experiencing when the Stockholm Conference on Confidence- and Security-building Measures and Disarmament in Europe was opened in the Swedish capital six years ago? If anyone had then prophesied developments like those we are now witnessing, he or she would have been scorned as a dreamer, a romantic out of touch with reality. But reality has outdone fiction. Many of us will recall the lyrics of the American poet and musician Bob Dylan, singing of another tumultuous period in our lifetime:

"The slow one now
Will later be fast
As the present now
Will later be past
The order is
Rapidly fadin'.
And the first one now
Will later be last
For the times they are a-changin'."

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

The times are indeed changing. 1988 was the year peace broke out. 1989 was the year of democratization. There is a widely held expectation that 1990 will become the year of disarmament. It is incumbent upon us to ensure that the Conference on Disarmament does its share to meet this expectation. Disarmament is not a romantic dream. We can make it a reality. Let us allow new expectations to be met by new concrete action. Let the Conference on Disarmament truly play the role for which it was created.

Without exaggerating, we may speak of a turning-point in world politics. The political about-face in Eastern Europe is most dramatic, of course. First, glasnost and perestroika in the Soviet Union, then drastic unilateral Soviet and East European disarmament undertakings, and, above all, the massive wave of democratization last autumn. What is particularly satisfying is that, with one exception, all of this has been brought about as a result of peaceful, popular, political mobilization. A new Europe is emerging, a Europe that has left the cold war behind. A Europe of democracy, progress and common security.

In building peace, we must abolish the tools of war. And disarmament has already made some progress, in line with the improved political climate. In December 1987 the Soviet Union and the United States concluded the first nuclear disarmament agreement in history - the INF Treaty - and are now in the process of physically destroying land-based intermediate-range nuclear missiles.

A militarily epochal bilateral super-Power agreement on 50 per cent cuts in strategic nuclear weapons is under way. Likewise, an agreement on significant conventional arms reductions in Europe is expected to materialize this year. The super-Powers are negotiating a bilateral agreement to cut back most of their chemical weapon arsenals, as a step towards a global comprehensive ban on chemical weapons. In addition to negotiated disarmament measures, several countries in both East and West - including the Soviet Union and the United States - are now taking unilateral steps to reduce their military forces and restructure them in more defensive postures. Furthermore, President Bush has just proposed significantly larger conventional forces reductions in Europe than those that had been envisaged in Vienna, while some East European countries are negotiating with the Soviet Union on complete troop withdrawals this year.

A curious yet truly fundamental feature of the dynamics of this situation is that the perception that the military threat is dissolving tends to become a self-fulfilling prophecy. Is the upward spiral of the arms race being turned into a downward disarmament spiral?

In order to safeguard a downward disarmament spiral, we must not lean back, content with what has been achieved. On the contrary, we must now take maximum advantage of the current opportunities. We must continue to transcend the entrenched boundaries of what are considered to be politically realistic objectives.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

While it is still too early to designate 1990 as the year of disarmament, I think one may fairly argue that we are beginning to see the contours of emerging, parallel disarmament measures: negotiated agreements or unilateral undertakings on strategic and other nuclear weapons, on chemical weapons, on conventional forces, on further confidence-building measures.

Regrettably, however, progress in global multilateral disarmament efforts has been slow compared with the recent record of the bilateral talks and the regional European negotiations. To the general public this is an enigma. If the major military Powers are seeking real disarmament, they ought to work actively for global agreements.

Over the last few years, we have become very familiar with the claim that the comprehensive chemical weapons convention will be concluded soon. Such statements cannot credibly be repeated for ever by diplomats, politicians and governments. The "rolling text" is in itself a significant achievement. If there is political will there are no insurmountable obstacles. We must be in a position to say how soon a chemical weapons convention can be expected.

In Sweden's view, the negotiations themselves could be concluded in a year's time, given the political will on all sides. A declared political commitment to reach agreement in a specified time frame has appeared conducive to reaching agreement in other negotiations. A corresponding public commitment to an agreed deadline has been considered in the chemical negotiations.

1989 started under the best auspices. The Paris Conference early last year seemed to have provided the necessary impetus and sense of urgency. My Government was convinced that the Paris Declaration, endorsed by some 150 States, with representation at a high political level, constituted a true commitment to the early conclusion of a chemical weapons ban by all participants. No one has better personified that commitment than the Ad hoc Committee Chairman for 1989, Ambassador Morel. Sweden is grateful for his energy, resourcefulness and unswerving loyalty to the task entrusted to him. We would like to thank him and to acknowledge our appreciation of the achievements made in the negotiations under his chairmanship.

The 1989 results of the chemical negotiations are very valuable. The protocol on inspection procedures, the annex on confidentiality, the annex on chemicals, the inclusion of a practically unbracketed annex I to article VI in the "rolling text", the progress on final clauses and on articles VII and VIII, the first texts on the composition of the Executive Council and the further elaboration of article IX, part 2 - all bear witness to the intensive and fruitful work carried out during 1989.

But however significant these results, they still do not constitute a breakthrough. The Paris Declaration had led us to expect a breakthrough.

We have still not been able to translate our common ground regarding challenge inspections into treaty language. We still do not know what a ad hoc verification system would look like. There is no broadly acceptable formula for the Executive Council's composition and decision-making. There are still widely disparate views on the principle that a total prohibition of

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

use should take effect at the same time as the convention comes into force. To a great extent, solutions to these problems are already available. What is needed is the political will, the commitment and the courage to really negotiate, to make choices, and to compromise.

The greater momentum of the bilateral consultations between the United States and the Soviet Union in 1989 is a good sign. The Committee has benefited from some of the results. Furthermore, one sign of good intentions is the bilateral memorandum of understanding regarding the exchange of data, confidence-building visits and ultimately inspections prior to the signature of the convention. It is disappointing, however, that the bilateral agreement on the order of destruction of chemical weapons and chemical weapons production facilities, confirmed and announced at the meeting at foreign minister level in Wyoming in September, has not yet been communicated to the Conference on Disarmament.

It seems that the delay is due to the emergency of potentially crippling reservations, which would allow certain States to retain chemical warfare agents until - in their unilateral judgement - all States capable of making chemical weapons subscribe to the convention.

Sweden fully shares the concern about ensuring global adhesion to the chemical weapons convention. However, reservations of this type risk doing the opposite by leaving a glaring loophole in the régime, thereby providing an excuse for other countries to retain - or to acquire - chemical weapons as well. In the Swedish Government's view, it is of vital importance that all States wishing to participate in the negotiations should be allowed to do so in accordance with the 1989 Paris Declaration.

1990 will be a crucial year in the negotiations on the chemical weapons convention. A definite breakthrough must now come.

The non-proliferation Treaty is a cornerstone of the international legal régime in the field of disarmament. It has made a significant contribution to international security for two decades. The renunciation of nuclear weapons through adherence to the non-proliferation Treaty by the vast majority of countries has gradually reinforced the international rejection of nuclear weapons and made non-possession of such weapons an emerging norm of international conduct.

By adhering to the non-proliferation Treaty, 140 States - 137 non-nuclear-weapon States and 3 nuclear-weapon States - have made a commitment to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The nuclear-weapon States parties - the Soviet Union, the United Kingdom and the United States - have undertaken to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date and to nuclear disarmament. The non-nuclear-weapon States have fulfilled their commitments under the Treaty. The nuclear-weapon States, however, must go far beyond militarily marginal reductions of existing arsenals if their part of the bargain is to be fulfilled.

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

Two factors are of particular importance in ensuring that the Treaty will not be eroded after 1995. Firstly, adherence to the Treaty has to be universal. I therefore urge the two nuclear-weapon States outside the Treaty, as well as all other States not yet parties to the Treaty, to accede to the NPT and participate constructively in the fourth review conference and subsequent efforts to ensure its prolongation beyond 1995.

Secondly, all obligations laid down in the Treaty must be fulfilled. As I have already said, the non-nuclear-weapon States which are parties to the Treaty have done their share. The obvious way for the nuclear-weapon States to honour their commitments under the Treaty and ensure its prolongation would be to drastically reduce their arsenals of nuclear weapons and to conclude a comprehensive test-ban treaty - the key to nuclear disarmament.

A comprehensive test ban is crucial for efforts to end the nuclear arms race. More than a quarter of a century ago, in the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty, three nuclear-weapon States expressed their determination to seek to achieve the discontinuance of all test explosions of nuclear weapons for all time. More than 21 years ago, in the non-proliferation Treaty of 1968, they restated the determination they had expressed five years earlier. Today, more than 26 years after the conclusion of the partial test-ban Treaty, negotiations on a comprehensive test ban have still not commenced.

The minimum contribution of the nuclear-weapon States to the review conference and the prolongation of the Treaty would be to agree to start negotiations on a comprehensive test ban. The demand for a comprehensive test ban is highly topical this year for two reasons. One reason is the review conference regarding the non-proliferation Treaty. Another reason is that efforts are in progress to convene an amendment conference to the 1963 partial test-ban Treaty. The objective stated is to transform the partial test-ban Treaty - which prohibits nuclear weapon tests in the atmosphere, in outer space and under water, but not under ground - into a comprehensive test-ban treaty. It is to be hoped that the nuclear-weapon States will correctly assess the political signals emerging from the initiative to convene such an amendment conference. It is to be hoped that they will allow the amendment conference to become the catalyst required to start negotiations in the Conference on Disarmament on a comprehensive test-ban treaty, speedily and in good faith.

For decades, my Government together with the vast majority of States has urged the Conference on Disarmament to initiate such negotiations, and has worked very actively towards this end, but so far in vain. My Government continues to consider such negotiations urgent. In fact, they are acquiring added urgency. And Sweden continues to believe they belong in the Conference on Disarmament.

Now that we have entered a more constructive period in East-West relations, disarmament negotiations will face new opportunities. But the constructive spirit must embrace all aspects of disarmament. Otherwise, there is an obvious risk that limitations in one area will be counteracted by armaments in another. Naval forces form an integral part of overall military force structures. They must therefore be integrated in, not exempt from efforts to achieve disarmament and build confidence. It is essential,

(Mrs. Theorin, Sweden)

therefore, that initiatives related to land-based military forces are accompanied by commensurate measures in the naval area. Given the necessary political will, it is possible to overcome geopolitical and legal differences.

Sea-borne nuclear weapons constitute a global problem which should be integrated in the disarmament process. This matter is an important aspect of the question of the cessation of the nuclear arms race and nuclear disarmament - item 2 of our agenda - which has so far not received the attention it deserves in this Conference. Naval confidence-building measures and the modernization of the laws of sea wafare must also be negotiated.

I have stated earlier that the question of the prevention of incidents on the high seas should be put on the agenda of the Conference on Disarmament. This matter can, and in Sweden's view should, be dealt with in the framework of agenda item 3, Prevention of nuclear war, as incidents at sea may escalate into nuclear conflict. The excessive number of nuclear weapons at sea is causing legitimate public concern world-wide. These feelings are underpinned by the secrecy which traditionally surrounds the deployment of such weapons. Sweden has therefore welcomed the decision by the United States to phase out several types of tactical nuclear sea-borne weapons unilaterally, and has urged the other nuclear-weapon States to follow suit.

We have noted that a discussion in unfolding within the United States on the need to review the policy of neither confirming nor denying the presence of nuclear weapons on board specific naval vessels. In this context, we note with great interest recent suggestions that the super-Powers should start talks aiming at the elimination of tactical nuclear weapons from surface warships and submarines. I welcome these developments, and would like to recall that my Government supports the proposal that all nuclear weapons should be prohibited on all ships and submarines, other than those classes specifically designated by agreement, as an interim measure in anticipation of the more far-reaching denuclearization of seas and oceans. In the post-war history of disarmament efforts, naval issues have been largely missing. In view of the particular sensitivities surrounding naval forces, I find the ongoing discussion very encouraging.

In the rapidly improved political atmosphere, it stands to reason that prospects for disarmament also improve. We must no longer succumb to the taboos of yesterday. The challenge is to transcend the achievements of today.

"Don't stand in the doorway
Don't block up the hall
For he that gets hurt
Will be he who has stalled"

as Bob Dylan used to sing.

"For the loser now
Will be later to win
For the times they are a-changin'."

The PRESIDENT: I thank the representative of the Kingdom of Sweden for her statement and for the kind words that she addressed to the Chair. In accordance with my earlier announcement, I now invite the representative of Mexico to take the floor in his capacity as Co-ordinator of the Group of 21.

Mr. MARIN BOSCH (Mexico): On behalf of the Group of 21, I should like to make the following statement on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons.

"The commitment of the international community to banning chemical weapons has been emphatically expressed on several occasions in the last year by Governments in unilateral statements as well as in the General Assembly of the United Nations, at the Ninth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, and at the Paris Conference, and by governments and industry together at the Canberra Conference. This commitment, and the repeated declarations of political will to this end, must be reflected in our work for 1990.

"It is essential that rapid progress be made on the political issues which are still outstanding, along with progress on technical issues. It is a serious concern of the Group of 21 that the substantive progress on primarily technical issues has not been accompanied by progress on some political issues of great importance to the Group, such as use of chemical weapons, assistance, sanctions and the Executive Council. A proper balance must also be established between rights and obligations for all the future parties to the Convention, in order to secure universal adherence to this important instrument of international law. This must be clearly reflected in the negotiations if they are to lead to a successful conclusion, thereby ridding the world of the threat of use of these awesome weapons of mass destruction.

"The conference on the prohibition of chemical weapons, which took place in Paris between 7 and 11 January 1989, in its Final Declaration, adopted unanimously by all participating States, stressed the urgency and the priority of the task entrusted to the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons and called on the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva 'to redouble its efforts, as a matter of urgency, to resolve expeditiously the remaining issues and to conclude the convention at the earliest date'.

"At the Government-Industry Conference held in Canberra from 18 to 22 September last year, the urgency of concluding a convention totally banning chemical weapons was further underlined.

"On 15 December 1989, the forty-fourth session of the General Assembly unanimously adopted two resolutions which refer to the work of the Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons. Resolution 44/115 A, on 'Chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons' expresses the regret of the General Assembly that 'a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of chemical weapons and on their destruction has not yet been concluded'. It 'again urges the Conference on Disarmament, as a matter of high priority, to intensify, during its 1990 session, which will be of pivotal importance, the negotiations on such a convention and to reinforce its efforts further

(Mr. Marín Bosch, Mexico)

by, inter alia, increasing the time that it devotes to such negotiations, taking into account all existing proposals and future initiatives, with a view to the final elaboration of a convention at the earliest date, and to re-establish its Ad hoc Committee on Chemical Weapons for that purpose with the mandate to be agreed upon by the Conference at the beginning of its 1990 session'. Resolution 44/115 B, on 'Measures to uphold the authority of the 1925 Geneva Protocol and to support the conclusion of a chemical weapons convention', specifically 'urges the Conference on Disarmament to pursue as a matter of continuing urgency its negotiations on a convention on the prohibition of the development, production, stockpiling and use of all chemical weapons and on their destruction'.

"Thus, less than two months ago, the General Assembly emphasized the urgency of the negotiations on the CW convention and urged this Conference to negotiate with a view to its final elaboration. The General Assembly also stressed that the convention should embrace inter alia the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons. All these points must be reflected in the mandate for the negotiations.

"The Group of 21 therefore continues to believe that the mandate to be adopted by this forum should include a reference to the prohibition of the use of chemical weapons, in order to be consistent with the General Assembly resolutions 44/115 A and B and with the language enshrined in the Final Declaration of the Paris Conference. The phrase 'except for its final drafting' should be deleted from the text of the mandate in order to convey to the international community our full acceptance of the responsibility entrusted to the Ad hoc Committee as contained in the three texts referred to above, which the States represented here adhered to without exception. As the General Assembly and the Paris Conference stated, the negotiations should be concluded at the earliest date. This must be clearly expressed in the mandate.

"The Group would like to emphasize the importance it attaches to all the aspects of the mandate and the conduct of the negotiations which have been outlined in this statement."

(continued in Spanish)

Finally, in my capacity as representative of Mexico, allow me to voice my very sincere thanks for the kind words concerning Ambassador García Robles expressed by you, Mr President, and the distinguished representative of Sweden, Ambassador Theorin.

The PRESIDENT: That concludes my list of speakers for today. Does any other member wish to take the floor? It seems not. As agreed during our informal consultations, I shall now suspend the plenary meeting and, in three minutes' time, convene an informal meeting of the Conference to consider the agenda and programme of work for the 1990 session, the re-establishment of subsidiary bodies and requests for participation received from States not members of the Conference.

The meeting was suspended at 12.20 p.m. and resumed at 12.30 p.m.

The PRESIDENT: The 532nd plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament is resumed. We shall now proceed to formalize the agreements reached at the informal meeting on a number of organizational questions.

I put before the Conference on Disarmament for decision working paper CD/WP.375, on the agenda for the 1990 session and the programme of work for its first part. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts this draft decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: We shall now take up working paper CD/WP.376 concerning the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons. If there is no objection, I shall consider that the Conference adopts the draft decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now turn to the appointment of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. I understand that the Conference agrees to appoint Ambassador Andrea Negrotto Cambiaso of Italy in that capacity.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I now turn to working paper CD/WP.377, relating to a draft decision on the re-establishment of the Ad hoc Committee on Radiological Weapons. If there is no objection, I shall take it that the Conference adopts the draft decision.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: I shall now put before the Conference the appointment of the Chairman of the Ad hoc Committee. I note that there is consensus on appointing Ambassador István Varga of Hungary as presiding officer.

It was so decided.

The PRESIDENT: On behalf of the Conference, I extend our congraulations to Ambassadors Negrotto Cambiaso and Varga on their important appointments. We wish them every success in discharging the heavy responsibilities facing them. I note that His Excellency the Ambassador of Italy has asked for the floor.

Mr. NEGROTTO CAMBIASO (Italy): Mr. President, allow me to express to you my sincere congratulations on taking up the presidency in this important opening month of the Conference, and my warm gratitude to Ambassador Benhima of Morocco for the excellent work he accomplished. I am more than confident, Mr. President, that thanks to your reliable guidance and experience the Conference on Disarmament will be able to embark fruitfully on the crucial undertakings ahead. I also wish to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to you for the warm words of welcome that have been addressed to me as the new representative of Italy in the CD.

(Mr. Negrotto Cambiaso, Italy)

I would very much like to thank you, Mr. President, and through you the distinguished members of the Conference, for the confidence that has been placed in me and my delegation through my appointment to the Chair of the Committee on Effective International Arrangements to Assure Non-nuclear-weapon States Against the Use or Threat of Use of Nuclear Weapons. We are aware that we are living in a particularly important time, witnessing events which raise our expectations of progress and better understanding in many fields, as was well pointed out in the message from the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar, as well as in the message from the President of Mexico and by the eminent figures who have addressed this body today. As to the specific field covered by this Ad hoc Committee, we are confident that in spite of the lack of substantial progress so far, the prospects for movement ahead on the issue depend very much on the efforts and good will that all of us will be able to contribute. My task, first of all, will be to proceed with the utmost pragmatism and openness, well aware of the difficulties but also of the chances made available by the new outlook in East-West relations. Therefore, dear colleagues, I will ask to be received in the coming days by each and every one of you, in order to collect from you suggestions and views on substantive and procedural questions. I will subsequently submit to you a programme of work.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Ambassador of Italy, and note that His Excellency the Ambassador of Hungary has asked for the floor.

Mr. VARGA (Hungary): First of all, Mr. President, I would like to congratulate you on taking up the presidency of the Conference on Disarmament and to join Ambassador Negrotto Cambiaso who has already expressed his good wishes to you. I would just like to thank the Conference on Disarmament through you, Mr. President, for the confidence they have invested in me as the Chairman of the Radiological Committee. I pledge my efforts to move work forward in the Committee on Radiological Weapons with a view to reaching agreement on a convention prohibiting the development, production, stockpiling and use of radiological weapons.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the distinguished Ambassador of Hungary for his statement. I should now like to give the floor to the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Ambassador Komatina, who will make a statement in connection with the services available to the Conference.

Mr. KOMATINA (Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations): Mr. President, I will not take long, as I have nothing new to report.

As the members of the Conference know, the United Nations continues to face a financial emergency. As in previous sessions, the Conference needs to implement the target reduction of 30 per cent in services allocated to it. That reduction will again apply to the number of weekly meetings. As was also the case in 1989, this will mean, in practice, the allocation to the Conference of 10 meetings per week with full servicing - 15 meetings per week with full services during the sessions of the Seismic Group. In other words,

(Mr. Komatina, Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations)

we will have scope for two daily meetings with full servicing throughout the whole of the 1990 session, plus one additional daily meeting when the Seismic Group is in session.

As the work of the Conference proceeds, it may be necessary to hold meetings of subsidiary bodies consecutively with other committees or working groups. This practice has already been put into effect in the past, and has prevented the waste of allocated resources in cases where the full three hours allocated for each meeting have not been fully utilized. In this respect, punctuality in starting meetings of the Conference is also important. I note that we are not using all the services assigned to us. For your information, in 1989 the Conference and its subsidiary bodies lost 76 hours and 55 minutes as a result of late starting of its meetings, 223 hours and 30 minutes as a result of early ending and 93 hours because of meetings cancelled. That makes almost 400 hours lost.

It is also understood that meetings with full services cannot be held in the evening or during weekends.

I also wish to remind you that measures accepted by the Conference at the informal meeting held on 22 April 1986 concerning documentation continue to be valid. In order to implement these decisions and bring about savings in the cost of documentation, all papers need to be presented in good time.

The PRESIDENT: I thank the Secretary-General of the Conference and Personal Representative of the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his statement. During our consultations, I noted that the members agree to the arrangments described by Ambassador Komatina. We shall therefore proceed accordingly.

I have no other business to consider today. If no delegates wish to take the floor, I intend to adjourn this plenary meeting. The next plenary meeting of the Conference on Disarmament will be held on Thursday, 8 February, at 10 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.40 p.m.